



TRAVELING THE ROAD TO A NEW CENTURY IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Healthy Alaskans Update



Targets and Strategies for Improved Health

a letter from Department of Health & Social Services Commissioner, Karen Perdue

The Department of Health and Social Services is engaged in a state health planning effort to improve the health of all Alaskans by the year 2010. In the last six months we have been working with our staff, State agencies, and partners in the Tribal health organizations and the private sector to identify the best indicators of health status to track over this decade, and to set ambitious but achievable targets. This letter is to report on the accomplishments to date, and to welcome your involvement in the next steps.

In the past six months, we have released a report updating the public on health status of Alaskans. We have also drafted chapters for the first volume of the Healthy Alaskans 2010 planning process report. *Healthy Alaskans 2010 Vol. I: Targets for Improved Health* will be published this summer. We invite your review and comment so the document will accurately reflect a broad consensus regarding the health of Alaskans.

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Vol. I: Targets for Improved Health will be used over the decade as the frame of reference for tracking changes in health status of Alaskans. It will also

serve as a framework for health policy development. While using the national Healthy People 2010 report as a model, it will reflect Alaskans' priorities and objectives for improving health status, modifying exposures to health risks, strengthening health care services, and reducing environmental and occupational hazards. Drafts for 25 problem-specific chapters have now been completed with assistance from DHSS staff and our partner agencies.



Commissioner
Karen Perdue

The objectives and targets for each chapter were presented at a full-day workshop following the Alaska Public Health Association's Health Summit in December 2000. We are now soliciting comments from the public to further improve the draft chapters.

We are currently moving on to the discussion of roles, responsibilities and strategies for action to achieve the goals and objectives for health set in the Healthy Alaskans 2010 target-setting process. The Alaska Public Health Improvement Process Steering Committee has taken on a new role as the Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council. The Council will identify strategies for mobilizing statewide and community action to address goals for improved health. They will oversee and guide the development of *Healthy Alaskans 2010 Vol. II*; which will provide strategies and policies for all Alaskans to reach the targets set in Volume I. *The Department of Health and Social Services Healthy Alaskans 2010 Action Plan* will include steps that the Department will take to implement the strategic plan and reach the targets set for this decade. This should serve as a roadmap to a healthier Alaska, providing guidance for State action and services.

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Vol. II: Strategies for Improved Health and *The Department of Health and Social Services Healthy Alaskans 2010 Action Plan* will be published in January 2002. The Department's implementation of the Action Plan in collaboration with community planning initiatives and State partnerships, is a priority of the Department of Health and Social Services.

I appreciate your support in working with us on this critical health improvement effort for Alaskans. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact Alice Rarig at (907) 465-1285 or email A_Rarig@health.state.ak.us.

Healthy Alaskans Update

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Public Comment Sought

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Volume I: Targets for Improved Health is modeled after *Healthy People 2010*, a set of health objectives for the Nation to achieve over the first decade of the new century. Twenty-five focus areas from the National initiative have been identified to be of concern in Alaska. These 25 problem-specific chapters are grouped into four cluster areas. Common themes run through the selected cluster of chapters, and overarching themes and linkages run across all 25 chapters. *Targets for Improved Health* will identify the best indicators of health status, and set ambitious but achievable targets.

Our website now has updated indicators and targets at www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/deu/projects/healthy/ha2010drafts.html. We welcome comments and suggestions. If you would like to submit your thoughts on one or more of the above chapters, please complete the on-line comment form by July 15.

We have also created a listserv as an additional means of obtaining comments, questions, and input from you on the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* process and drafts.

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Phases and Products

Phase One: Assessment and Target-Setting July 2000 - August 2001

Health Status in Alaska, 2000 Edition

- Updated health status assessment from the last decade
- Report Published January 2001

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Vol. I: Targets for Improved Health

- Use to track changes in health status of Alaskans over the next decade
- Serve as framework for health policy development
- Identify best indicators of health status
- Set ambitious but achievable targets

Phase Two: Strategic and Action Planning April 2001 - January 2002

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Vol. II: Strategies for Improved Health

- Proposed theme: shared responsibility
- Strategies and policies for all Alaskans to reach the targets

DHSS Healthy Alaskans 2010 Action Plan

- Steps the Department of Health & Social Services will take to implement the strategic plan
- Implementation of the action plan through departmental efforts
- Collaboration with community partners

Please go to <http://list.state.ak.us/guest/RemoteListSummary/HealthyAK2010> and enter your email address to subscribe. As new chapters become available, we will notify you via the listserv. We welcome anyone who wishes to join.

Healthy Alaskans 2010 Volume I Chapters

Health Promotion

- Physical Activity and Fitness
- Nutrition and Overweight
- Tobacco Use
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Educational and Community-based Programs
- Health Communication

Health Protection

- Injury and Violence Prevention
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Environmental Health
- Food Safety
- Oral Health
- Vision and Hearing

Preventive Services & Access to Care

- Access to Quality Health Care
- Maternal, Infant and Child Health
- Family Planning
- Immunizations & Infectious Disease
- HIV Infection and STDs
- Arthritis and Osteoporosis
- Heart Disease and Stroke
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Respiratory Diseases
- Disability and Secondary Conditions

Public Health Infrastructure

- Data and Information Systems
- Workforce
- Public Health Organizations

APHIP Steering Committee Takes on New Role; New Name



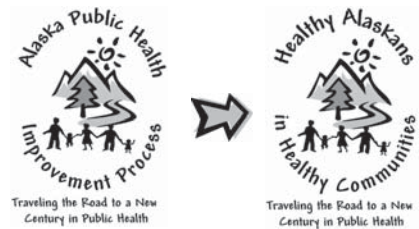
Members of the Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council in small group discussion at the April 13 meeting in Anchorage

The Alaska Public Health Improvement Process Steering Committee, at their most recent meeting in Anchorage on April 13, accepted a new role as the partnership guiding the Healthy Alaskans 2010 process. With this new role of assisting with a broader, statewide health planning effort, the group adopted a new name – The Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council. The new name reflects the nature of the group as a partnership working together toward improved health, not just as an advisory committee. Referring to the group as a “Council” also acknowledges that the membership does not include all of the many players and partners in Alaska’s public health system, but is representative of the system.

The charge for this group is to:

- Identify strategies for mobilizing statewide and community action to address goals for improved health
- Work together on the development of the Healthy Alaskans 2010 strategic plan
- Provide input on the Department of Health & Social Services’ Healthy Alaskans 2010 Action plan
- Support implementation of the Healthy Alaskans 2010 strategic and action plans
- Coordinate Healthy Alaskans 2010 with other statewide health planning efforts
- Provide oversight and accountability for the Turning Point Grant, especially implementation of the Alaska Public Health Information System
- Upon conclusion of the Turning Point Grant (March 2004), make recommendations regarding continuation of the Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council

Members include representatives from the Alaska Public Health Association, Alaska Environmental Health Association, Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Alaska Native Health Board, Alaska State Medical Association, Elmendorf AFB, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the University of Alaska, the Hispanic Organized Leaders of Alaska, the Alaska Ministerial Alliance, the Municipality of Anchorage Department of Health & Social Services, and community health coalitions from Fairbanks, Kenai/Soldotna, and Sitka. The Partnership is looking to expand membership to include more representation from the behavioral health sector, business/industry, other minority groups in addition to Alaskan Native and Hispanic, and more rural communities.



The Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council will keep the APHIP logo, with a modification that reflects the Council’s vision.



Alaska Public Health Information System Progress Report

The Division of Public Health is making progress on the development of the Alaska Public Health Information System.

This new information system is a strategy meant to address the Alaska Public Health Improvement Plan goal of *increased access to public health information for communities, policy makers, and the general public*, and is partly supported by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The first step in this project was to provide sufficient capacity in the new Data & Evaluation Unit to meet information development and dissemination needs. The Division achieved this goal, and published the first annual report on health in Alaska, *Health Status in Alaska 2000 Edition*, in January 2001.

The Unit is now working on creation of an on-line community health profile system for Alaska. The profiles will summarize important demographic data at the census area/borough level, and compare health indicators in these areas to regional, state and national rates and goals. Graphs and maps of specific data will be available. Information provided through this system is meant to facilitate community-based planning and development, and will facilitate the preparation of grant applications and community presentations and reports. The Unit is currently working to identify the indicators that will be included in the community health profiles, and plans to have the system up and running by December 2001. Links to other resources will also be updated to assist data users who want additional or more detailed information.

Alaska Leads National Effort to Develop a Model State Public Health Law

Law is fundamental to public health practice as it provides the authority for public health officials to act to protect and promote the health of the public. It is also an important tool for prevention (e.g., immunization law, seat belt laws, etc.). Recent studies have found that state public health laws do not adequately define the purpose and function of public health, are antiquated, and do not comply with modern scientific and legal developments. Healthy People 2010 advises that "...the Nation's public health infrastructure would be strengthened if jurisdictions had a model law and could use it regularly for improvements."

Recognizing the importance of the legal framework to the support of a strong public health system, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation under their Turning Point initiative is funding the development of a model state public health law. The Foundation awarded funds to the Alaska Division of Public Health to lead this important national effort.

The Foundation funded four other states to participate as partners in the Collaborative: Oregon, Colorado, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. Federal agencies and national organizations partnering in this effort include: CDC, HRSA, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors' Association, Institute of Medicine, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, American Public Health Association, National Association of County & City Health Officials, the National Association of Local Boards of Health, and the National Indian Health Board.

The Collaborative has contracted with Lawrence Gostin (of Georgetown University Law Center and the Johns Hopkins/Georgetown Center for Law and the Public's Health) to conduct an assessment of current state public health law and to assist with the development and drafting of the model act.

The timeline for this project is as follows:

Phase I: Assessment of Current Law
June, 2000 - May, 2001

Phase II: Development of Model Act
June, 2001 - August, 2003

Phase III: Dissemination of Model Act
September, 2003 - April, 2004

For more information on the Collaborative you may visit the web site at: www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/APHIP/collaborative.htm

Alaska Participates in National Program to Identify Best Practices in Public Health Performance Management

The Alaska Division of Public Health received funding under the RWJ Turning Point Implementation Grant to participate as a member of the National Collaborative on Public Health Performance Management. The goals of this project are to develop useful performance management models for state and local public health agencies, stimulate national dialogue and consensus on performance management in public health, and support the application of performance management as a core discipline of public health practice. The Collaborative began its work in April 2000, and will continue through March 2004.

First-year activities are focusing on development of a baseline assessment of current performance management practices in public health agencies. Final products (to be completed in years 3 and 4) will include a Performance Management Toolkit with menus of models for implementation, and an Implementation Training Guide. The Collaborative has contracted with the Public Health Foundation to serve as consultant to this project.

Other states participating in the Collaborative include Illinois (lead state), New York, Montana, New Hampshire, Missouri, and West Virginia. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Association of County & City Health Officials, and Association of State & Territorial Health Officials are also partners in this project.

Sitka Participates in National Workgroup on Public Health Governance

The Sitka Turning Point Towards Health Coalition is one of only nine community partnerships from across the country selected to participate in the National Workgroup on Public Health Governance. The Workgroup, under the guidance of the Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health at the New York Academy of Medicine, is designed to help community partnerships explore procedures and structures that can be used to broaden community participation in defining and assessing health, in prioritizing health issues, and in taking collective action to address priority health needs. The Workgroup expects to produce a final report by the fall of 2001.



Sample Data and Graph for Alaska Community Health Profile System

(See related article

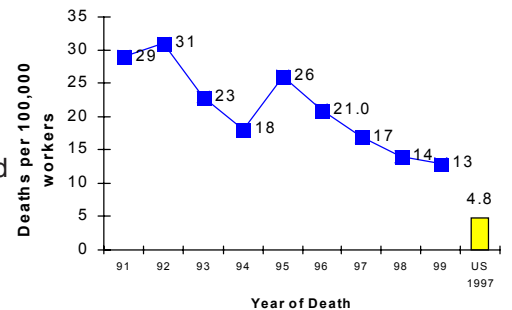
*"Alaska Public Health information System
Progress Report" on Page 3)*

Deaths from Work-Related Injury

Aleutians East Borough 1991-99

- Total number of Aleutians East work-related injury deaths 1991-99: **58**
- Average number of Aleutians East work-related deaths per year: **6**

Alaska: Work-Related Injury Mortality Rate



Data source: Section of Epidemiology

Rates for census area not available because occupational injury fatalities recorded by area of occurrence, not area of residence

Data & Information Resources

For links to a number of commonly used data sources for state and local health planning activities, check out the Data and Evaluation Unit's web page on "Resources" – <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/deu/resources/resources.html>

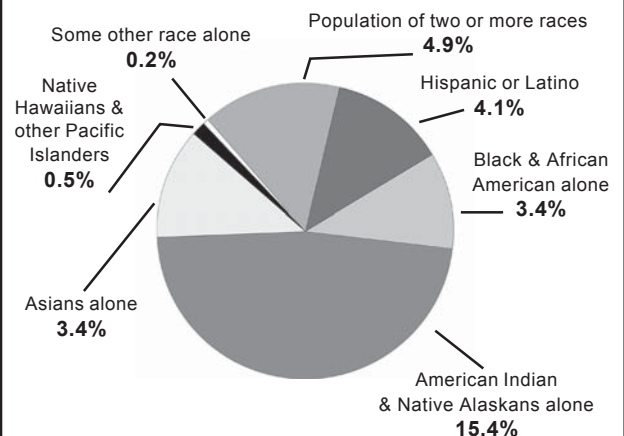
Two files may be of particular interest: Public Health Database Inventory List which provides a description of the current databases within the Division of Public Health, including their key variables, published reports, accessibility, and website links. For specific questions concerning each database, refer to the contact person listed.

Another file provides links to many other agencies' data sources – click on the "Framework for Needs Assessment Data — Sources." The state and national reports included can provide information on employment, poverty, Medicare enrollment, and much health data – although there are limitations associated with "small areas."

As the 2000 Census data is gradually released, you may want to check regularly on the Census website, www.census.gov. At present a direct link to the state, census area/borough and "census designated place" demographic profiles can be obtained from http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/tables/redist_ak.html. To download the Adobe Acrobat file with demographic profiles (age and sex, race, Hispanic ethnicity by type, and some initial household and housing occupancy data) you will need to click on the "File Transfer Protocol (FTP): Alaska" item in the press release. You can then print just the pages you need from the document – the whole book would be 607 pages printed out. Another way to obtain the demographic profiles and other census data for Alaska is from the Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section website: <http://www.labor.state.ak.us/research/research.htm> (click on the Census Data links).

Check out the Alaska Health Education Library Project's website (<http://www.ahelp.org>) for information on projects, programs, materials, events, and resources on a variety of topics related to health promotion in Alaska. The website is also a gateway to other state and national health promotion resources and leading agencies

Alaska - Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Race Groups Other than White, 2000



Labels show percentage of the total population represented by the group; Except for Hispanic, the groups are all "Non-Hispanic"